(N.Y. Post.)

Say CIA Knew of JFK Slay Plot

CIA agents allegedly knew Lee Harvey Oswald was plotting to kill President Kennedy two months before the Nov. 22, 1963, slaying, but the information was not relayed to top officials until the morning of the assassination, according to the Baltimore News American.

The newspaper quoted an unidentified source who was "close to CIA operations at the time" as saying the information gathered by agents in Mexico City had been pigeonholed in the bureaucratic maze until too late to effectively protect Kennedy.

"Apparently no one took the information seriously or it was deliberately delayed," the source was quoted as saying.

He did not say what steps the CIA had taken once the information was brought to the attention of John A. McCone, the CIA director.

The paper said yesterday that CIA agents had kept constant watch on Oswald during a visit to Mexico City in late September 1963, bugging his conversations inside the Cuban and Soviet embassies and infiltrating a meeting at which he and others allegedly discussed plans for the assassination.

According to the source, the clandestine meeting was attended by Oswald and a member of the Communist Party in Texas, a woman and several other persons.

The source also said Oswald and another young man had plotted to kill Kennedy in Atlanta in October 1963, but had been foiled when then-Defense Secretary Robert McNamara replaced an ailing Kennedy at the last minute.

The CIA would not comment on the News American story, according to the Associated Press today. Instead it referred to an earlier statement in which the agency acknowledged that it had received information that Oswald had contacted both the Soviet and Cuban embassies in Mexico City in late September or early October.

The statement did not refer to a possible plot against Kennedy or mention any reason for Oswald's visit to Mexico City, other than to obtain a visa to Cuba.

According to the Baltimore paper's source, the CIA reportedly had learned of Oswald's activities through its surveillance, bugging and "plants" inside the Mexico City embassies.

Oswald reportedly became "outraged" by the refusal of embassy officials to grant him an entry visa into Cuba and a heated oral exchange occurred inside the Cuban embassy, the source said.

In another development, the Associated Press reported that the Justice Dept. has launched a criminal investigation into the destruction of a threatening letter that Oswald delivered to the Dallas FBI office shortly before Kennedy's assassination. The FBI is also conducting its own internal probe of the case.

Oswald, the accused Kennedy assassin who was slain by Jack Ruby before facing trial, reportedly threatened to blow up a Dallas police station unless the FBI stopped trying to find him.

The letter reportedly was destroyed soon after the Kennedy assassination and was never brought to the attention of the Warren Commission which investigated Kennedy's death.

A knowledgeable Justice Dept. source said it seemed unlikely that criminal charges would be brought for destruction of the letter, since the statute of limitations has expired for obstruction of justice or destruction of evidence. However, he said, conspiracy charge time limits are much more flexible.